

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as indicated hereafter. [Use ~~strikethrough~~ for deleted matter (or double square brackets"[[]]" if the strikethrough is not easily perceivable, *i.e.*, "4" or a punctuation mark) and underlined for added matter.]

In the Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A device (1, 101) for protecting an electrical power distribution network against the overvoltages due, in particular, to a lightning strike, ~~this protective device comprising the device comprising:~~
 - a first electrode (3) electrically connected to the ~~network to be protected,~~ electrical power distribution network;
 - a second electrode (4) connected to a grounding ~~conductor,~~ and conductor;
 - focusing means (5) capable of guiding an electric arc generated between the ~~two electrodes~~ first electrode and the second electrode toward a fractionation device ~~(6), said device comprising device (6); and~~
 - a casing (2, 102) which accommodates the ~~two electrodes,~~ first electrode and the second electrode, the focusing means and the fractionation device, ~~this the~~ casing being in communication with the outside through at least one discharge channel (7, 107) designed so as to substantially lower the temperature of the gases generated by the formation of the electric arc, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said at least one discharge channel (7) has at least one change of section.
2. (Currently Amended) The device as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said at least one channel (7, 107) extends substantially in the same plane as the fractionation device (6).
3. (Currently Amended) The protective device (1, 101) as claimed in ~~claim 1 or 2,~~ claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said at least one discharge channel (7) has at least one chicane (20, 120).

4. (Currently Amended) The protective device (1, 101) as claimed in claim 3, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said at least one chicane (20, 120) forms an angle of between 45° and 180°.
5. (Currently Amended) The protective device (1, 101) as claimed in ~~any one of claims 1 to 4,~~ characterized in that claim 1, wherein the fractionation device (6) is arranged between the focusing means (5) and the inlet of the discharge channel (7).
6. (Currently Amended) The protective device (1, 101) as claimed in ~~any one of claims 1 to 5,~~ characterized in that claim 1, wherein the fractionation device (6) is formed with the aid of a set of parallel metal plates (14).
7. (Currently Amended) The protective device (1) as claimed in ~~claim 5, characterized in that~~ claim 6, wherein the metal plates (14) are kept at a distance from one another with the aid of two blades (15) having orifices engaged in lateral lugs (16) located on each of the metal plates.
8. (Currently Amended) The protective device (1) as claimed in ~~any one of claims 1 to 7,~~ characterized in that claim 1, wherein the focusing means (5) define an arc guiding space substantially having an overall shape which diverges in the direction of the fractionation device.
9. (Currently Amended) The device as claimed in ~~the preceding claim, characterized in that~~ claim 8, wherein the discharge channel (107), comprises at least a first and second section (119, 123) which are substantially parallel and have substantially equal or at least similar lengths, said sections being in communication through a cavity (121).
10. (Currently Amended) The protective device (1, 101) as claimed in claim 9, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the discharge channel (107) extends laterally relative to the fractionation device.

11. (Currently Amended) A device (1, 101) for protecting an electrical power distribution network against the overvoltages due, in particular, to a lightning strike, ~~this protective device comprising the device comprising:~~

a first electrode (3) electrically connected to the ~~network to be protected,~~ electrical power distribution network;

a second electrode (4) connected to a grounding ~~conductor,~~ and conductor;

focusing means (5) capable of guiding an electric arc generated between the ~~two electrodes~~ first electrode and the second electrode toward a fractionation device (6), ~~said device comprising~~ device (6); and

a casing (2, 102) which accommodates the ~~two electrodes,~~ first electrode and the second electrode, the focusing means and the fractionation device, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said casing is in communication with the outside through two discharge channels which are substantially arranged symmetrically relative to the fractionation device, on either side of it, said channels extending substantially in the same plane as the fractionation device.